CAPTINGTON MUST EXPLAIN

Why He Did Not Land Provisions at Littleton Island When He Could Have Done So,

And Why the Proteus Did Not Keep Closer Company With the Yantic.

Gen, Hazen Also Taken to Task for the Loose Way in Which His Orders Were Prepared.

A Curious Contract for Coal-A Court of Inquiry Ordered.

The secretary of war has written the following letter to the chief signal officer, in reply to the communication of the latter transmitting Lieut. Carlington's report of the relief expedition to Smith's sound:

Oct. 31, 1883—To THE CHIEF SIGNAL OF-FICER, U. S. A.—Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the sixteenth instant, inclosing the report of First Lieut. E. A. Garlington, 7th eavairy, upon the expedition sent to the Arctic seas this summer for the relief of the international meteorological expedition under the command meteorological expedition under the command of Lieut. A. W. Greely, 5th cavairy, and also the letter of the acting chief signal officer of the twenty-third instant, inclosing Lieut. Garlington's responses to your special inter-

rogations.

It is needless to say to you that the disastrous failure of this relief expedition, upon the success of which depended, as it may perhaps hereafter be learned, the lives of a number of the success of the same of the success of the same of the sam has because of which depended, as it may perhaps hereafter be learned, the lives of a number of men, has widely excited public attention, and that there is a general desire to understand clearly the causes of this failure, and that it may be known where the responsibility therefor rests. It is apparent that two things at least were omitted, either one of whigh being done the general object of the expedition would have been accomplished up to a certain point, and the party, not seriously crippled, would have been left at a place from which it could have proceeded to execute its further plans for the relief of Lieut, Greely and his party.

The loss of the Proteus alone, happening whree it did, might have been a matter of no importance in this connection. It was fully contemplated that if it failed to reach Lady Franklin bay it was to return to St. John's, leaving the relief party in winter quarters at or near Littleton Island.

If Lieut, Garlington had prudently made a base of supplies at or near Littleton island it would have been a matter of little consequence to him or his party weather.

base of supplies at or near Littleton island it would have been a matter of little consequence to him or his party whether the Proteus went to St. John's or, without loss of life, to the bottom of the ocean.

On the other hand, if the Proteus had succeeded in reaching Lady Franklin bay, its extra stores would not, as I understand, have been needed by Lieut. Greely, who was there abundantly provided for, and the taking of these extra stores past Littleton island was not only useless for any surpose, as Leonesia. not only useless for any purpose, as I conceive, but was a fatal risk.

It would therefore seem that the directions contained in the memorandum mentioned in your letter, that Liout. Garlington should in going up establish a base of supplies, was a most prudent measure, the omission of which after it had once been thought of is as difficult to understand as it is deeply to be re-gretted. It is now clear that it was never an order to Lieut. Garlington, but it is equally clear that, having seen it and having under your orders a discretion, he could not have done more wisely than to follow the particu-lar suggestion, contained in it show more lar suggestion contained in it above men-

I consider it necessary to inquire into the I consider it necessary to inquire into the history of this memorandum. It appeared as a loose paper, inclosed with your letter of instructions to Lieut. Garlington, dated June 4, 1883, but it is not mentioned in that letter. I am advised by the secretary of the navy that while he was preparing his orders for the Yantic you furnished his department with a supposed copy of that letter, which, it like manner, did not mention the memorandum and did not inclose it. This copy, as did the original, covered four mentioned inclosures, but only one of them seems to have did the original, covered four mentioned inclosures, but only one of them seems to have been like its original. The three other inclosures, as now seen, differ entirely from those with the original letter, and do not, of course, meet their own description as found in the body of the supposed copy of the original letter.

After the telegraphic reports of the disaster were received I, upon the request of the secretary of the navy, directed the acting chief signal officer, in your absence, to prepare for and furnish to the secretary of the nany a copy of your instructions to Lieut. Garling-ton. This last, as furnished, contains only three inclosures, four being mentioned in the body of the letter. One of them was sub-stantially like one of the inclosures with the original letter; another was substantially like original letter; another was substantially like one of those with the first copy above mentioned; and the third was marked "Inclosure 4" (an inclosure 4 being noted in the letter), and is a copy of the "memorandum" in question. These latter papers were, of course, supposed by the secretary of the navy and myself to be, as stated, an authentic copy of your instructions to Lieut. Garlington, and swe, in our conferences, formed an opinion as to his having disobeyed an order which it to his having disobeyed an order, which it now appears he did not, in fact, receive as an

I have had prepared, and herewith inclose a tabulated statement and memorandum of the above mentioned discrepancies, and some others of less importance existing in the above mentioned papers, which it is thought ought to be alike, and I request to be advised ought to be alike, and I request to be advised what explanation there is, if any, for these discrepancies; and, further, what the records sof your office show to have been done with the above "memorandum" after its original preparation; and what in case Lieut. Garlington had himself been lost upon this expedition, would have prevented the resting upon his record of the imputation of having disobeyed a positive instruction as to landing his extra stores at or near Littleton island on his way north.

his way north.
I may also add that I observe in the agreement between yourself and the owners of the Proteus, under which it started upon this expedition, a clause providing for the sale by the Proteins to Lieut. Greely's party at Lady Franklin bay of coal, if needed, to the amount of seventy tons. I beg that you will advise me why it was supposed that that party might need to have the benefit of a contract for fuel to that amount, in case the Protein had successfed in reseiting factor. Proteus had succeeded in reaching Lady

Franklin bay.

The other important omission to which I have referred is the failure of Lieut. Garling-ton to keen his ship in company with the Yantic. I have not observed in any of his papers a satisfactory explanation as to his reasons for permitting the Protous to be separated from the Yantic before their arrival at Littleton island or its neighborhood. He was imformed by his letters of instructions that the Yautic would accompany him as far as Littleton island. The assistance of the may in this way was reconstituted. as far as Littleton island. The assistance of the navy in this way was regarded by us as adding greatly to the probable success of the expedition and as an almost perfect protec-tion acainst great disaster. But, instead of sailing together, the movements of the ves-sels were so conducted that for all the good the Yantie was to Lieut Green's new to sels were so conducted that for all the good the Yantic was to Lieut. Greely's party in any way,or to Lieut. Garlington's relief party in saving their lives or their supplies, the Yantic might as well have left St. John's in 1884 as when it did. At the very outset, at St. John's, it appears from these papers that Lieut. Gar-lington and the commander of the Yantic made an agreement, embodied in an unsigned written memorandum, that upon leaving St. written memorandum, that upon leaving St. John's the Proteus was to steam and the Yantic was to go under sail; and the agreement does not seem to contemplate the prob ability of their being again in company until about Aug. 25, at Pandora harbor, not far from Littleton island. As it happened, Lieut. Garlington was still at Godhaven when, on July 12, the Yantic arrived thore, the commander of the Yantic saying that he would have to read to the transit forms. would have to remain about a week to make some repairs and to coal. The Proteus re-mained four days of this week, and without waiting the other three days steamed away alone to become a wreck. Instead of using the Yantic as a convey and companion, the Protous was moved by written agreement and by design as though escaping from the Yantic.

I am not satisfied with Lieut. Garlington's

explanation of the causes which led him into the very grave and, perhaps, fatal error of going south from Littleton's island after the loss of the Protous. If he had remained there he would have been succored by the Yantic in eight days, and a relief station for Lieut. Greely's party would have been established. The loss of the Protens would then have been little more than an inconvenience. I cannot understand how it was that while on July 22, on his way north, when in his own words, "The weather was perfect, calm, warm, delightful, " " " there was no lee as far as could he seen from the crow's nest with the aid of a very powerful telescope," he felt so safe even away from all communication with the Yantic; that he saw no necessity of making a baze of supplies at Littleton island; yet four days later, at the same place, he did not suppose the Yantic could get up to where he was, and so put to sea, with all his party, in small boats in an Arctic ocean. The Yantic was bound to go there. Imagine, if possible, the reception which the commander of the Yantic would have had if he had returned home in September with no news of the Protous and without having been to Littleton island. It is not forgetten that Lieut. Garlington was not in a pleasant place, nor that he endured very great hardships, but he had volunteered for the performance of an important duty, with a full knowledge of the cortain difficulties and of the desolation which would surround him, and the demand upon him was correspondingly great.

In his supplemental report, Liout. Garexplanation of the causes which led him into

upon him was correspondingly great.

In his supplemental report, Liout. Garlington says that "when the Protons encountered the pack in Melville bay no one on board that vessel thought the Yantic would cross the bay. This opinion was formed from the known intention of the commander

of the Yantic not to put his vessel into the ice." This opinion was formed on the way north, and therefore prevailed when Licut. Garlington pasted Littleton island. It was in effect that no assistance could come from the Yantic, and that those on the Protous was the count descend only the count of the c the Yautic, and that those on the Protees must depend only upon themselves for the attainment of the two alternative objects of their voyage—first, to reach Lieut. Greely with their ship, and failing, that the establish-ment of a well provided relief station at or near Littleton island. The last object could have been assured by merely delaying for a fow days their dangerous northward voyage; and it now appears that a delay of but little more than a week would have permitted not and it now appears that a dolay of but little more than a week would have permitted not only the establishment of the station, but would have put them again in close communication with the Yantic. For, as Licut. Garlington says, "As it turned out to everyone's surprise the Yantic saw no ice in Melville bay, and had an uninterrupted passage to Littleton island." Licut. Garlington's singularly unfortunate errors of judgment as to his own safety in going in one direction. and as to his own safety in going in one direction, and as to the Yantic's danger in coming from the opposite direction, were each productive of disaster. It appears to me that Lieut. Garlington's supplemental report only tends to make an understanding of his failure to remain at or near Littleton island after the loss main at or near Littleton island after the loss of the Proteus more difficult than before. If he had no hope of the Yautic coming north, not from lack of enterprise in its commander, but on account of the assumed unfitness of the ship for such a voyage and the orders by which it was controlled, how is it that he expected to carry out the plan outlined in his supplemental report, where he says that

the "determined to communicate with the Yantic as soon as possible to do so, to get from her all the sup-plies that could be spared, and establish a depot at Life Boat cove?" Life Boat cove is near Littleton island. It is not to be sup-posed that he thought that the Yantic would accomplish more under his guidance than be-fore, and would come north to Littleton island or Life Boat cove to land supplies if its orders or its condition were such as to pre-vent its coming. It is even more improbable that Lieut. Garlington could reasonably exthat Lieut. Garlington could reasonably expect to cross a large expanse of Arctic sea in small boats and return them, necessarily in a late season, with supplies and shelter for a winter station at Life Boat cove. Upon due consideration I have thought it proper to submit the case to the President, with my recommendation that he direct the appointment of a court of inquiry to investigate the fitting out of the Greely relief expedition, transported by the steamer Proteus, having particular reference to the orders and instructions therefor, and for the conduct of the expedition and the arrangements made for assistance from the United States steamer Yantic; and also the general conduct of the expedition, including particular conducts of the conduct of the capacity of the conduct of the capacity of the capac conduct of the expedition, including particu-larly the failure of the Proteus to keep in company with the Yantic up to Littleton island, or its neighborhood, and the failure to establish a well provided relief station at or near Littleton island; and with directions to report their findings and their opinions as to whether the conduct of any officer of the army in the promises calls for further proceedings before a court martial, and the reasons for the conclusions which

they may reach.
The President has thereupon directed that a court of inquiry be appointed, as recom-mended, and the necessary orders will be at once issued. I am very respectfully, your obedient servant, ROBERT T. LINCOL

Secretary of War. The following special order was issued by the war department yesterday:

the war department yesterday:

By direction of the President of the United States, a court of inquiry is hereby appointed to investigate the organization and fitting out of the Greely relief expedition party, transported by the steamer Proteus, having particular reference to the orders and instructions issued for the guidance and government thereof and the arrangements made for assistance from the United States steamship Yantio.

The court will make a full and thorough investigation of all matters relating to the general conduct of the expedition, including particularly the failure of the Proteus to keep in company with the Yantic up to Littleton island or its neighborhood, and the failure to establish a well provided station at or near Littleton island, and will take into consideration in their investigation such records and correspondence pertaingulation such records and correspondence pertaingulation in the order. and will take into consideration in their investigation such records and correspondence pertaining to the original Gruely expedition as they may deem necessary, and will report the facts developed by their investigation and their opinion as to whether the conduct of any officer of the army in the premises calls for fartiter proceedings before a general court martial, and the reasons for the conclusions which they may reach.

Detail for the court: Brig. Gen. S. V. Benet, chief of ordinance: Col. R. B. Ayres, 2d artillery, and Lieut. Col. O. M. Poe, corps of engineers. Maj. Henry Goodfellow, judge advocate, U. S. A. will act as recorder of the court. The court will meet in the city of Washington on the eighth day of November, 1883.

Romest T. Lincoln.

Secretary of War.

Secretary of War.

It is understood that the navy department will not take any further action in the case of Commander Frank Wildes, commanding the United States steamer Yantic, for the part taken by him in the late expedition, unless it shall be deemed expedient as the result of testimony which may be developed in the proceedings of the court of inquiry appointed

by the secretary of war. The Putnam River. Lieut. George M. Storey, U. S. N., has submitted to the secretary of the navy a chart of the Putnam river in the territory of Alaska, which he discovered in his recent visit to the Arctic region as the bearer of presents to the Tehouetche Indians.

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